

## Special Veterans Issue

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### Remembering Pearl Harbor

President Franklin D. Roosevelt distinguished December 7, the day of the attack on Pearl Harbor as "a day which will live in infamy," and it has. Several of our Navy's ships were destroyed and nearly 2,400 died during the attack. The nation was enraged.

Our nation swore an oath 60 years ago during World War II. We swore, "Remember Pearl Harbor - Remember those who sacrificed. Don't ever let it happen again." To our horror on September 11th, 2001, it did.

On that day, over nearly 4,000 civilians were killed as a result of ruthless attacks on our nation. Japanese Admiral Chuichi Yamamoto had feared the attack on Pearl Harbor would awaken a sleeping giant that would be filled with terrible resolve. He was right on the mark.

Today, our country is again filled with terrible resolve and terrorists worldwide should be aware that once again the sleeping giant has been awakened. Our history is a rich resource and defines our nation, but we sometimes forget the sacrifices made by our men and women both in and out of uniform which have provided the comforts we enjoy in this "the greatest nation on earth".

I would take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the our current service members dedicated to protecting our freedoms and on this "Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day" to those who sacrificed and dedicated themselves to fighting tyranny long ago and throughout our history.

### WWII hero honored with Bronze Star

Robert Brewer was honored last Monday with the Bronze Star for demonstrating extreme courage and valor while assisting other soldiers as his transport ship, the British troopship HMT Rohna, was on fire and sinking into the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Algeria.

Rep. Richard Pombo, R-Tracy, presented Brewer with the medal at a small ceremony in Stockton's Karl Ross American Legion Post on Monday, 58 years to the day after the Rohna was destroyed by a state-of-the-art, rocket-powered, guided German missile.

Because of the enormity of the tragedy, the U.S. and British governments immediately placed the sinking under wraps, and it stayed that way until last year, when Rep. Jack Metcalf, R-Wash., introduced a resolution recognizing the event, the 2,020 U.S. soldiers aboard the ship and the 1,015 Americans killed.

The attack on the Rohna was one of the worst ship attacks in World War II, comparable to the bombing of the USS Arizona, in which 1,177 were killed.

In mind Nov. 26, 1943 the Rohna was blasted, and within an hour, it had sunk. During that time, Brewer assisted in applying tourniquets, bandaging wounds and helping soldiers off the ship and into the water.

Brewer -- who went on to complete 28 years of active service and retired as a colonel -- said there was "tremendous panic, fright and fear" on the ship but that he did what any of his comrades would have done.

*Reprinted from the Record*

### Show your support for our troops in harms way.

Visit my webpage to send them a message. Showing your support is especially important during this holiday season. Follow the link below:

<http://www.house.gov/pombo/>

### Today in History

**1787** - Delaware became the first state to ratify the U.S. constitution becoming the first of the United States.

**1796** - John Adams was elected to be the second president of the United States.

**1836** - Martin Van Buren was elected the eighth president of the United States.

**1941** - Pearl Harbor, located on the Hawaiian island of Oahu was attacked by nearly 200 Japanese warplanes. The attack resulted in the U.S. entering into World War II.

**1964** - Brian Wilson, of the Beach Boys, suffered a nervous breakdown on a flight from L.A. to Houston. The event led Wilson to stop touring with the group.

**1987** - Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev set foot on American soil for the first time. He had come to the U. S. for a Washington summit with U.S. President Reagan.

**1988** - Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev announced the reduction of the number of Soviet military troops by half a million.

**1993** - Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders suggested that the U.S. government study the impact of drug legalization.

**1998** - U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno declined to seek an independent counsel investigation of President Clinton over 1996 campaign financing.

*From The History of Today*

## Pearl Harbor Facts

- At 6:00 a.m. on 7 December, the six Japanese carriers launched 181 planes composed of torpedo bombers, dive bombers, horizontal bombers and fighters.
- In the hours before dawn, U.S. Navy vessels spotted an unidentified submarine periscope near the entrance to Pearl Harbor. It was attacked and reported sunk by the destroyer USS Ward and a patrol plane.
- At 7:00 a.m., an alert operator of an Army radar station at Opana spotted the approaching first wave of the attack force. The officers to whom those reports were relayed did not consider them significant enough to take action.
- The Japanese aircrews achieved complete surprise when they hit American ships and military installations on Oahu shortly before 8:00 a.m. They attacked military airfields at the same time they hit the fleet anchored in Pearl Harbor. The Navy air bases at Ford Island and Kaneohe Bay, the Marine airfield at Ewa and the Army Air Corps fields at Bellows, Wheeler and Hickam were all bombed and strafed as other elements of the attacking force began their assaults on the ships moored in Pearl Harbor.
- Twenty-one ships of the U.S. Pacific Fleet were sunk or damaged. Aircraft losses were 188 destroyed and 159 damaged, the majority hit before they had a chance to take off. American dead numbered 2,403. That figure included 68 civilians, most of them killed by improperly fused anti-aircraft shells landing in Honolulu. There were 1,178 military and civilian wounded.
- Japanese losses were comparatively light. Twenty-nine planes, less than 10 percent of the attacking force, failed to return to their carriers. The Japanese success was overwhelming, but it was not complete. They failed to damage any American aircraft carriers, which by a stroke of luck, had been absent from the harbor. They neglected to damage the shoreside facilities at the Pearl Harbor Naval Base, which played an important role in the Allied victory in World War II. Most importantly, the shock and anger caused by the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor united a divided nation and was translated into a wholehearted commitment to victory in World War II.
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*Reprinted from the Naval Historical Center*

### Weekly Quote

"I fear that all we have done is awaken a sleeping giant, and fill it with a desire for vengeance."

- Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, said to a fellow officer after the attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941.

### Wordsmith

#### pa·tri·ot

**Pronunciation:** 'pA-trE-&t, -"ät, chiefly British 'pa-trE-&t

**Function:** noun

**Etymology:** Middle French patriote compatriot, from Late Latin patriota, from Greek patriOtEs, from patria lineage, from patr-, patEr father

**Date:** 1605

: one who loves his or her country and supports its authority and interests

*Reprinted from www.m-w.com*

## By the Numbers

### America's Wars Totals (through September 30, 2001)

Military service during time of war .....	41,865,460 - 42,831,460
Battle Deaths .....	47,410
Other Deaths (in Theater) .....	10,788
Other Deaths in Service (Non-Theater) .....	est. 32,000
Non-mortal Woundings .....	153,303
Living War Veterans .....	(18,848,057)*
Total Living Veterans .....	25,038,459*

*Source: Department of Defense, unless otherwise indicated*

\* VA estimate